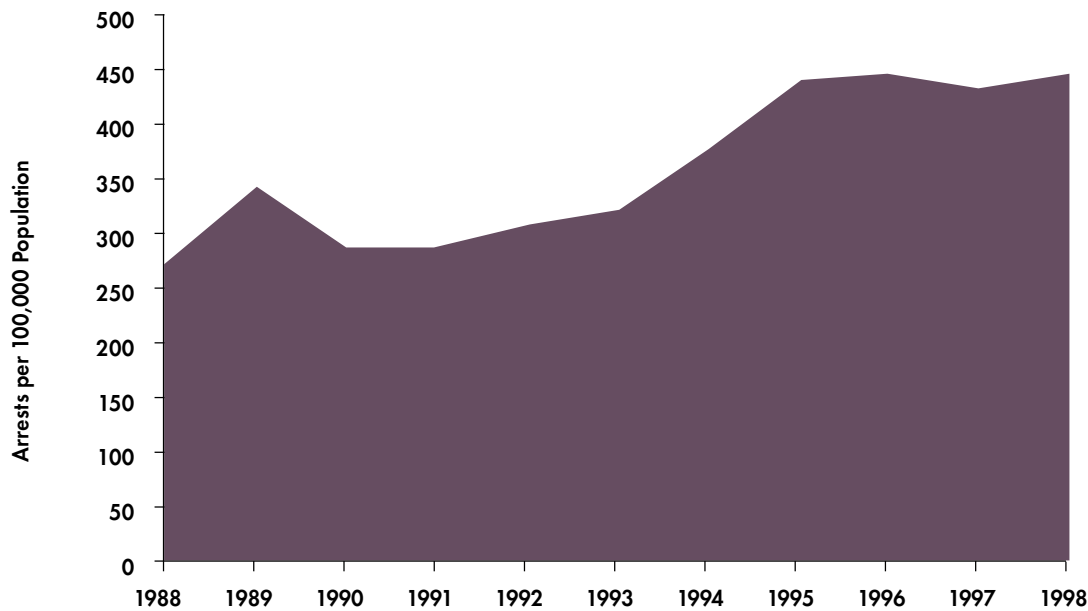


Display 18: Drug Arrest Rates (1988–1998)

Data Sources: Crime in Virginia, Uniform Crime Reporting Section, Virginia Department of State Police;
U.S. Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia.

Display 18: Drug Arrests in Virginia

Drug crime is the third major type of crime examined in this report. Due to the covert nature of drug use and distribution, there is no direct measure of the number of drug offenses that occur in Virginia. The criminal justice system's primary measure of drug offending is the numbers of arrests made for sale and possession of illegal drugs.

Arrest data presented in this display are based on arrests for the sale or possession of Schedule I and II drugs and marijuana, because almost all known drug offending in Virginia involves these substances. The term "sale" includes the manufacturing, selling, giving, distributing or possessing with the intent to distribute these substances.

This display presents drug crime arrest rates for the years 1988–1998. Rates are based on the total number of drug sale and possession crime arrests made by law enforcement agencies per 100,000 persons in Virginia's population.

■ The overall trend for drug arrests in Virginia is markedly different from the trends for violent and property crime arrests seen previously in this report. Whereas violent and property arrest trends peaked in the early or mid-1990s and then declined, drug arrests increased sharply during the mid-1990s and continued to increase at a slower rate through 1998.

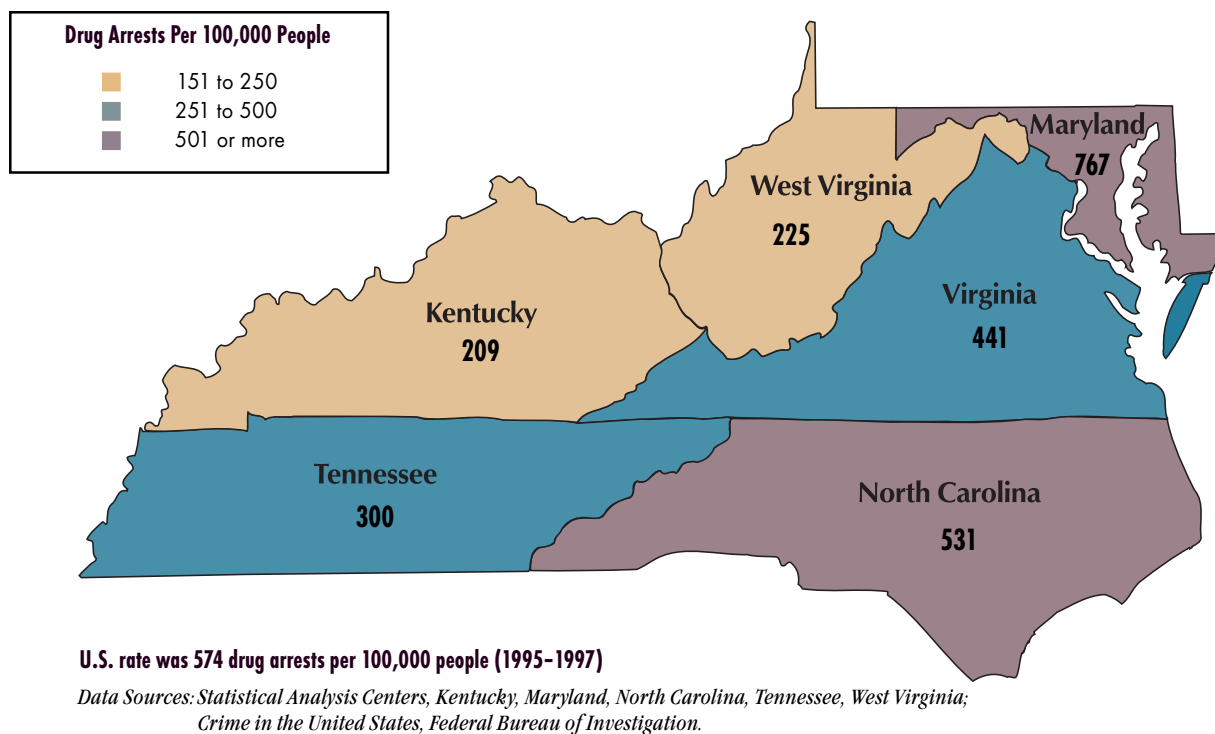
■ Between 1988 and 1998, Virginia's drug arrest rate increased by 60%, with most of this increase occurring during 1994 and 1995. In terms of numbers of drug arrests made statewide, slightly more than 16,000 drug arrests were made in 1988, compared to more than 30,000 in 1998.

■ Coping with drug crime places major demands on the resources Virginia's criminal justice system. For example, law enforcement agencies reported making 30,344 drug offense arrests in 1998, almost three times the number of arrests reported for all violent offenses in that year. During 1998, persons convicted for drug offenses made up one-quarter of all the new inmates committed to the Virginia Department of Corrections.

Note: In Virginia, Schedule I and II drugs are defined by Virginia's Drug Control Act (Chapter 34 of Title 54.1). Schedule I drugs are defined as substances with a high potential for abuse, no accepted medical use in treatment in the U.S., or lacking accepted safety for use in treatment under medical supervision. Examples include heroin and LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide). Schedule II drugs are defined as substances with a high potential for abuse, that have some limited medical use, and that may lead to severe psychic or physical dependence if abused. Examples include amphetamine, cocaine, and PCP (phencyclidine). Under Virginia law, marijuana is not classified as a Schedule I or II drug.

Unlike arrest trends for violent crimes and property crimes, arrest rates for drug offenses in Virginia increased substantially between 1988 and 1998

Display 19: Drug Arrest Rates in Virginia, Border States and the U.S. (1995–1997)



Display 19: Drug Arrests in Virginia, Border States and the U.S.

As previously noted, Virginia's 1998 drug arrest rate was the highest in at least a decade. However, this current high rate is not unique to Virginia. To put Virginia's rate in perspective, it is useful to compare it to recent drug arrest rates for the region and the nation.

This display compares Virginia's drug arrest rate to the national rate and the rates for five border states: Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia. Rates shown on the map above are based on three-year averages of the number of UCR-reported drug arrests per 100,000 people in the years 1995 through 1997.

■ Virginia's drug arrest rate of 441 per 100,000 people is higher than the rates for three of the five border states. Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia had arrest rates below Virginia's rate.

■ Virginia's rate of 441, although higher than several bordering states, is well below the national rate of 574 per 100,000 people. Historically, Virginia's drug arrest rate has remained below the national rate.

■ Four other states (Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia) also had arrest rates below the national rate. Kentucky, with the lowest drug arrest rate in the region, had a rate less than one-half of Virginia's rate and the national rate.

■ As was the case with regional violent crime offense rates, Maryland had the highest rate in the region. Maryland's rate was 74% greater than Virginia's rate, and was the only state in the region that exceeded the U.S. rate.

Note: 1998 data were not used for calculating the three-year averages shown on the map because complete 1998 data were not available for all of the border states.

Virginia's 1995–1997 drug offense arrest rate was above the rate for three of the five states that border Virginia. However, Virginia's rate was well below the national drug arrest rate

Displays 20 and 21: Drug Arrest Rates for Virginia Localities

Display 18 showed that Virginia's drug arrest rates significantly increased from 1988 to 1998. However, arrest trends for individual localities may differ from state-level trends, and trends may vary depending upon the types of drugs and drug activities involved. Displays 20 and 21 present detailed information on locality-level drug arrest rates.

Displays 20A and 20B show average drug arrest rates and ranks for each of Virginia's 95 counties and 41 independent cities for the periods 1988 to 1990 and 1996 to 1998. Arrest rates are grouped in five levels, based on the three-year average number of drug arrests reported per 100,000 people in each locality. Three-year average rates are used to provide a stable measure of arrests in communities. This is critical when measuring arrests rates for small localities in which a small change in the number of arrests from one year to another may produce large changes in arrest rates. Numbers on the maps indicate each locality's total arrest rate ranking relative to all other localities. For example, Petersburg, with a number 1 on the map in Display 20A, had the highest total drug arrest rate during 1988–1990.

Display 21 presents detailed 1996–1998 average drug arrest rate information for each locality. The total drug arrest rate and rates for four types of drug crime are shown for each locality, as well as each locality's rank on these measures relative to all other localities in the Commonwealth.

■ A comparison of the maps in Displays 20A and 20B shows that generally the localities with the highest total drug arrest rates in 1988–1990 also had the highest rates about 10 years later in 1996–1998. For example, five of the 10 localities with the highest overall arrest rates in 1996–1998 (Emporia, Fredericksburg, Petersburg, Richmond City, and Winchester) were also among those with the 10 highest rates in 1988–1990. Similarly, several of the localities with the lowest drug arrest rates in 1988–1990 were among the ten with the lowest rates in 1996–1998.

■ Generally, rural localities in Virginia's Central, Southside and Northern Neck regions had the lowest total drug arrest rates, whereas cities tended to have the highest rates. However, Displays 20A and 20B also indicate that many rural localities in these regions had increases in drug arrest rates over the last decade. This may indicate the spread of illicit drug activity from urban areas to more rural communities in the Commonwealth.

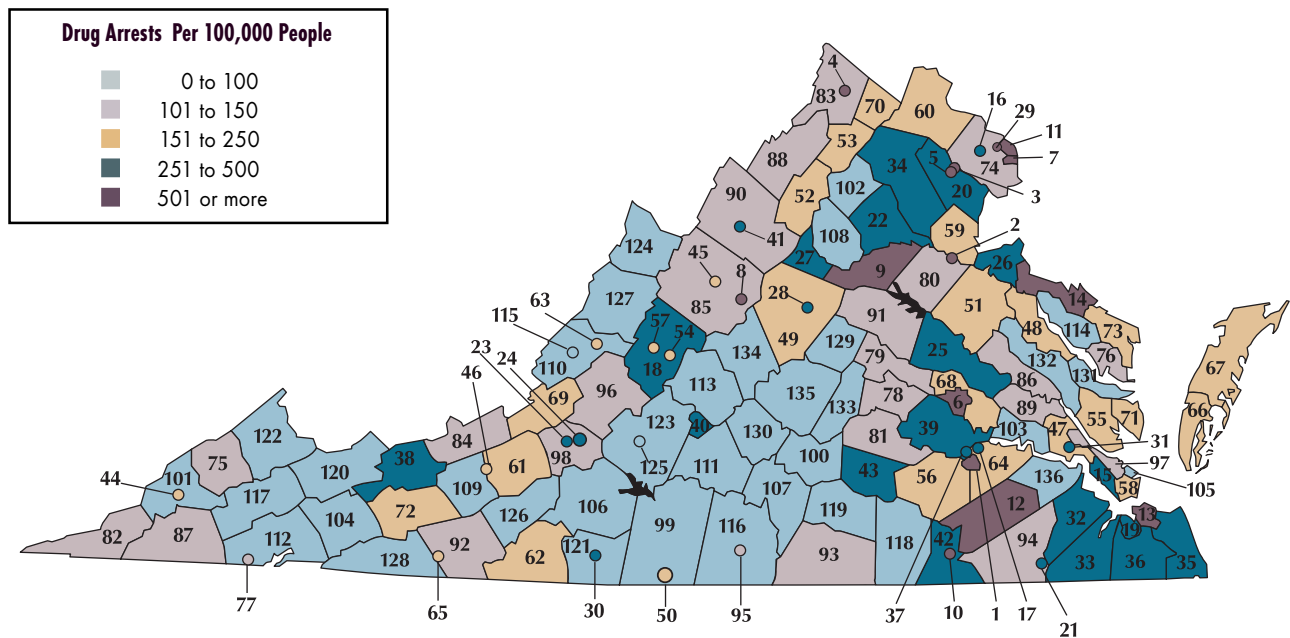
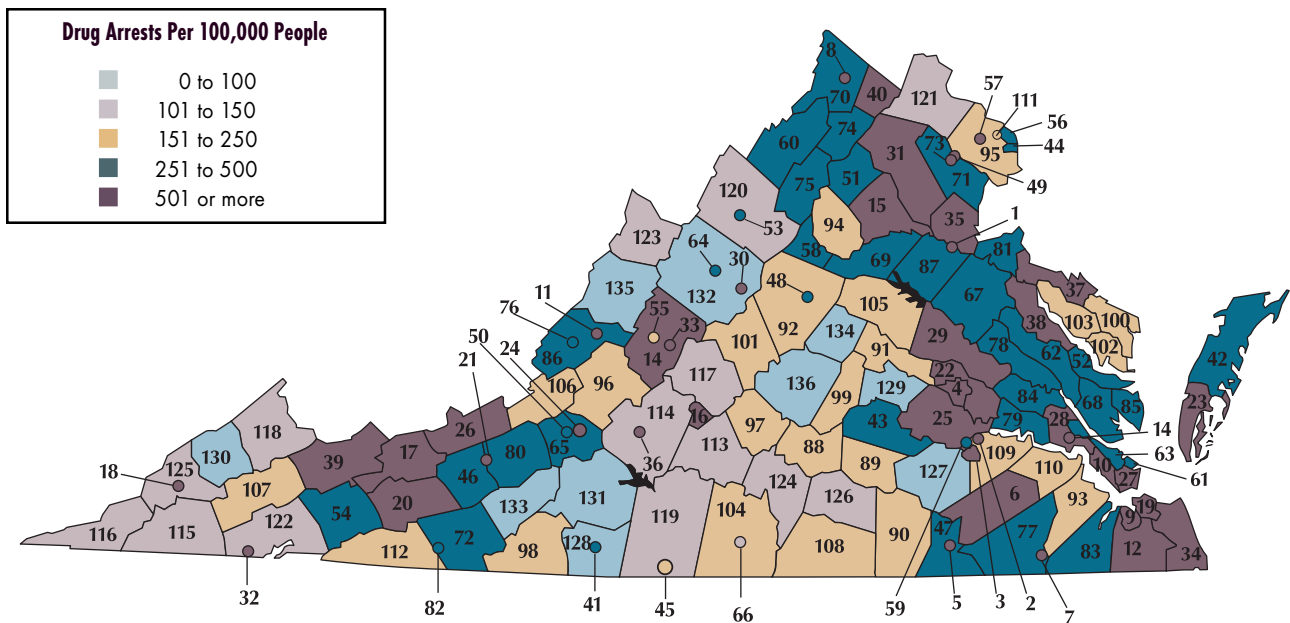
■ As was previously seen with violent crime offense rates, examination of detailed locality data shows that the total drug arrest rate for a locality may not adequately reflect its rates for specific types of drug offenses. For example, Display 21 shows that during 1996–1998, the cities of Buena Vista and Waynesboro, and the counties of Rockbridge, Bland and Giles, all ranked in the top ten localities on certain marijuana offense arrest rates, but these communities ranked lower for overall drug arrest rates. Similarly, Colonial Heights, Bristol and South Boston ranked in the top ten for certain narcotics offense rates, but ranked much lower on their overall drug arrest rates. These findings suggest that community responses to drug abuse problems should take into account the specific types of drug problems they are experiencing.

■ Examining additional factors unique to each locality may provide further insights into why drug arrest rates vary. For example, Fredericksburg is a relatively small community which ranks 1st in the state on its 1996–1998 total drug arrest rate. However, several unique factors suggest that local drug use alone may not be driving this high rate. Due to its location, multiple transportation systems converge in Fredericksburg. These include north-south Interstate highway I-95, a known drug trafficking corridor, and Route 3, a primary east-west state highway. Moreover, Amtrak links Fredericksburg to larger cities in the north, including New York and Baltimore, and has been linked to drug trafficking. Local rail transportation and major highways also provide a direct link between Fredericksburg and nearby Washington, D.C., which is a major drug trafficking area.

■ Analysis of drug arrest rates offers localities the opportunity to monitor local changes in substance use and drug selling. For example, an increase in the arrest rate could indicate an emerging drug market, local changes in substance use or preference for specific drugs, or decreased tolerance and more aggressive local enforcement of drug laws. Therefore, examining locality-specific data may provide communities with information needed to identify and respond to emerging drug trends.

■ During the last decade Virginia has provided substantial funding to local efforts such as multi-jurisdictional anti-drug task forces. Such increases in local law enforcement resources for detecting and apprehending drug offending have probably contributed to increases in drug arrest rates.

***Virginia's rural localities
generally had the
state's lowest drug arrest
rates, but many of these
localities experienced
an increase in their rates
over the last decade.***

Display 20A: Drug Arrest Rates Across Virginia (1988-1990)**Display 20B: Drug Arrest Rates Across Virginia (1996-1998)**

— Display 21: Drug Crime Arrests in Virginia Localities (1996–1998) —

COUNTIES	TOTAL DRUG ARRESTS		SALE OF NARCOTICS		POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS		SALE OF MARIJUANA		POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rates	Rank
Accomack	490	42	212	22	62	48	41	28	175	58
Albermarle	232	92	105	42	13	126	9	95	105	91
Alleghany	257	86	55	77	24	104	21	61	157	65
Amelia	484	43	301	15	26	101	42	26	114	86
Amherst	134	117	57	73	38	75	4	119	34	118
Appomattox	211	97	28	105	20	111	8	104	155	67
Arlington	403	56	42	89	97	28	13	86	250	37
Augusta	72	132	53	79	3	134	0	129	17	128
Bath	61	135	0	132	20	110	0	129	41	117
Bedford	142	114	20	111	19	117	14	81	90	97
Bland	697	17	19	114	67	45	58	14	553	3
Botetourt	212	96	14	121	19	115	36	32	143	72
Brunswick	240	90	84	55	58	52	0	129	98	96
Buchanan	131	118	17	117	26	98	13	87	75	104
Buckingham	43	136	0	132	7	130	5	118	32	121
Campbell	143	113	47	86	21	107	9	98	66	107
Caroline	346	67	6	128	68	42	17	70	254	36
Carroll	326	72	93	51	29	91	34	35	170	59
Charles City	293	79	88	54	83	35	20	65	102	93
Charlotte	119	124	56	76	22	105	8	100	33	120
Chesterfield	635	25	52	81	95	29	46	22	442	7
Clarke	509	40	42	90	204	11	29	39	235	39
Craig	180	106	0	132	13	124	7	108	160	63
Culpeper	710	15	77	61	175	13	24	51	434	9
Cumberland	209	99	41	91	45	70	25	48	98	95
Dickenson	74	130	20	112	18	118	6	111	31	122
Dinwiddie	100	127	32	99	10	128	14	83	45	115
Essex	523	38	271	16	36	78	29	38	188	56
Fairfax	217	95	11	123	45	69	13	85	148	70
Fauquier	570	31	198	25	26	99	19	67	326	21
Floyd	71	133	28	104	28	94	8	103	8	133
Fluvanna	70	134	0	132	11	127	2	126	57	113
Franklin	74	131	11	122	17	119	17	69	29	125
Frederick	335	70	111	39	24	103	7	105	193	53
Giles	611	26	151	30	38	74	121	4	300	27
Gloucester	344	68	63	69	53	58	27	41	202	48
Goochland	236	91	53	80	53	57	6	112	125	80

Rank is locality's offense rate relative to rates for all other Virginia localities in the table.

More than one locality may have the same crime rate due to rounding. However, each locality has a unique rank because ranks were calculated using exact rather than rounded crime rates.

— Display 21 (Cont.): Drug Crime Arrests in Virginia Localities (1996–1998) —

	TOTAL DRUG ARRESTS		SALE OF NARCOTICS		POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS		SALE OF MARIJUANA		POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rates	Rank
COUNTIES										
Grayson	151	112	28	103	14	122	20	64	89	98
Greene	395	58	22	110	34	82	56	16	283	30
Greenville	442	47	74	63	91	31	12	91	265	32
Halifax	199	104	156	28	30	90	2	125	12	131
Hanover	576	29	25	107	139	19	24	49	388	15
Henrico	659	22	77	60	169	15	56	15	357	17
Henry	91	128	33	95	27	97	4	121	27	126
Highland	120	123	0	132	13	124	0	129	107	89
Isle of Wight	221	93	11	126	74	39	14	80	123	82
James City	581	28	60	70	160	16	67	13	294	29
King & Queen	378	62	56	75	77	37	36	33	209	45
King George	291	81	69	65	47	67	22	56	154	68
King William	298	78	45	87	47	65	16	74	190	55
Lancaster	204	102	50	84	38	73	9	96	107	90
Lee	137	116	15	119	21	109	38	29	63	108
Loudoun	124	121	11	124	19	116	15	75	79	101
Louisa	181	105	65	67	21	108	37	30	58	111
Lunenburg	102	126	40	92	27	95	5	114	30	123
Madison	219	94	19	115	53	56	3	124	144	71
Mathews	266	85	91	52	40	72	22	59	113	88
Mecklenburg	173	108	58	71	27	96	9	99	79	100
Middlesex	422	52	145	32	145	17	18	68	113	87
Montgomery	292	80	56	74	68	41	29	40	139	75
Nelson	208	101	65	66	51	61	15	77	77	102
New Kent	268	84	19	116	29	92	16	73	204	47
Northampton	649	23	351	8	62	47	52	18	184	57
Northumberland	209	100	64	68	113	24	3	123	29	124
Nottoway	241	89	140	33	37	76	4	120	59	110
Orange	340	69	50	83	46	68	26	44	218	44
Page	312	75	90	53	32	86	35	34	155	66
Patrick	211	98	207	23	0	135	0	129	4	135
Pittsylvania	128	119	111	40	3	133	2	127	12	130
Powhatan	87	129	73	64	0	135	3	122	11	132
Prince Edward	245	88	103	45	52	59	16	72	75	103
Prince George	171	109	14	120	32	85	9	97	115	85
Prince William	334	71	31	100	54	55	21	62	229	40
Pulaski	447	46	157	27	106	26	22	58	162	62

Rank is locality's offense rate relative to rates for all other Virginia localities in the table.

More than one locality may have the same crime rate due to rounding. However, each locality has a unique rank because ranks were calculated using exact rather than rounded crime rates.

— Display 21 (Cont.): Drug Crime Arrests in Virginia Localities (1996–1998) —

	TOTAL DRUG ARRESTS		SALE OF NARCOTICS		POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS		SALE OF MARIJUANA		POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rates	Rank
COUNTIES										
Rappahannock	425	51	5	130	33	83	14	79	373	16
Richmond	200	103	104	44	35	80	8	102	54	114
Roanoke	351	65	23	108	50	62	15	76	263	33
Rockbridge	752	13	83	57	85	34	127	3	457	6
Rockingham	125	120	32	97	15	121	6	109	71	105
Russell	179	107	32	98	30	89	13	84	104	92
Scott	137	115	16	118	30	88	33	36	58	112
Shenandoah	392	60	114	38	36	79	75	10	167	60
Smyth	410	54	79	59	47	66	78	9	206	46
Southampton	305	77	104	43	61	50	11	92	129	79
Spottsylvania	255	87	8	127	19	114	7	106	221	42
Stafford	533	35	11	125	60	51	23	54	438	8
Surry	167	110	36	94	68	44	0	129	63	109
Sussex	993	6	395	5	183	12	23	53	392	13
Tazewell	523	39	330	11	56	54	12	89	124	81
Warren	319	74	99	47	22	106	67	12	131	78
Washington	122	122	48	85	14	123	26	45	34	119
Westmoreland	524	37	301	14	64	46	23	55	135	77
Wise	119	125	52	82	19	113	5	115	44	116
Wythe	676	20	156	29	68	43	25	46	428	10
York	377	63	84	56	50	63	25	47	219	43
INDEPENDENT CITIES										
Alexandria	477	44	150	31	139	18	21	60	166	61
Bedford City	529	36	107	41	80	36	32	37	310	24
Bristol	568	32	522	3	6	131	19	66	21	127
Buena Vista	534	33	26	106	31	87	120	5	356	18
Charlottesville	436	48	243	17	103	27	9	94	80	99
Chesapeake	766	12	5	129	29	93	49	20	683	2
Clifton Forge	820	11	135	35	135	20	45	23	504	4
Colonial Heights	394	59	350	9	24	102	6	110	14	129
Covington	308	76	81	58	19	112	14	78	194	52
Danville	471	45	94	50	222	10	6	113	149	69
Emporia	1082	5	512	4	88	32	71	11	412	12
Fairfax City	402	57	20	113	73	40	8	101	301	26
Falls Church	156	111	3	131	75	38	7	107	71	106
Franklin	967	7	352	7	267	7	22	57	326	22
Fredericksburg	1514	1	237	19	496	3	42	27	739	1

Rank is locality's offense rate relative to rates for all other Virginia localities in the table.

More than one locality may have the same crime rate due to rounding. However, each locality has a unique rank because ranks were calculated using exact rather than rounded crime rates.

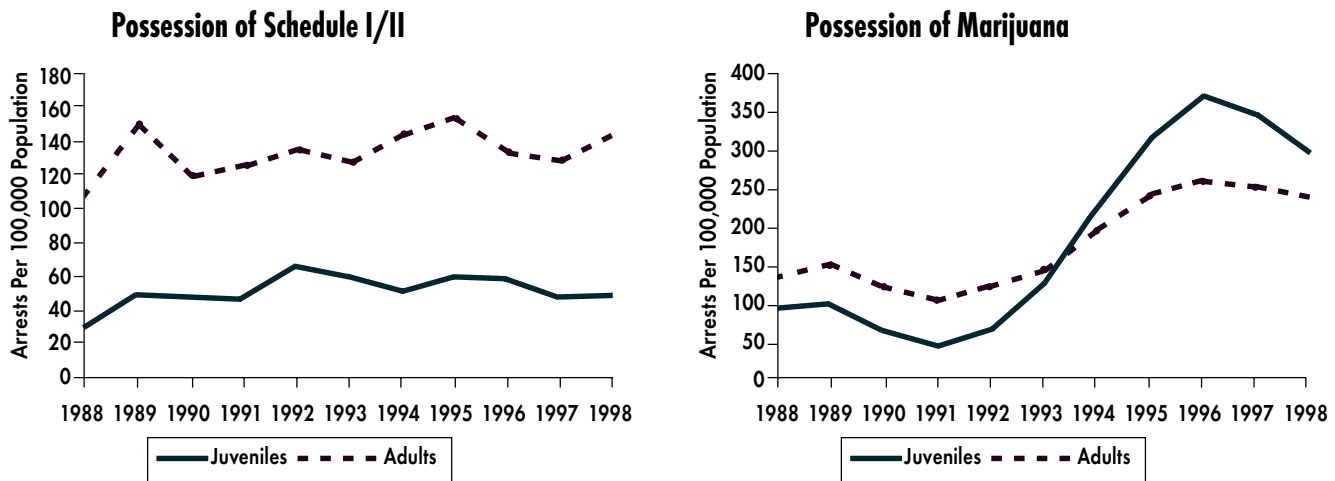
— Display 21 (Cont.): Drug Crime Arrests in Virginia Localities (1996–1998) —

	TOTAL DRUG ARRESTS		SALE OF NARCOTICS		POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS		SALE OF MARIJUANA		POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA	
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Rates	Rank
INDEPENDENT CITIES										
Galax	288	82	127	37	49	64	10	93	102	93
Hampton	609	27	238	18	26	100	151	2	194	51
Harrisonburg	413	53	23	109	34	81	14	82	342	20
Hopewell	1331	2	322	12	441	5	89	6	478	5
Lexington	407	55	75	62	51	60	23	52	257	35
Lynchburg City	697	16	100	46	241	9	48	21	308	25
Manassas	324	73	161	26	42	71	5	117	117	83
Manassas Park	435	49	97	48	129	22	12	90	198	50
Martinsville	499	41	58	72	251	8	0	129	191	54
Newport News	833	10	43	88	489	4	44	24	258	34
Norfolk	678	19	32	96	314	6	17	71	315	23
Norton	685	18	306	13	16	120	89	7	274	31
Petersburg	1313	3	1307	1	4	132	1	128	1	136
Poquoson	386	61	29	102	32	84	27	43	298	28
Portsmouth	877	9	140	34	582	1	12	88	143	73
Radford	667	21	97	49	170	14	56	17	345	19
Richmond City	1098	4	357	6	566	2	37	31	138	76
Roanoke	639	24	227	20	116	23	52	19	244	38
Salem	427	50	226	21	37	77	24	50	140	74
South Boston	347	66	333	10	10	129	0	129	5	134
Staunton	366	64	55	78	58	53	27	42	227	41
Suffolk	287	83	30	101	95	30	5	116	157	64
Virginia Beach	534	34	40	93	85	33	20	63	388	14
Waynesboro	571	30	200	24	61	49	193	1	116	84
Williamsburg	739	14	129	36	106	25	78	8	426	11
Winchester	926	8	550	2	132	21	43	25	201	49

Rank is locality's offense rate relative to rates for all other Virginia localities in the table.

More than one locality may have the same crime rate due to rounding. However, each locality has a unique rank because ranks were calculated using exact rather than rounded crime rates.

Display 22: Arrest Rates for Specific Drug Crimes—Adults & Juveniles (1988–1998)



Data sources: *Crime in Virginia*, Uniform Crime Reporting Section, Virginia Department of State Police; U.S. Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia.

Display 22: Arrests for Specific Drug Crimes

Display 18 showed that Virginia's drug arrest rate substantially increased from 1988 to 1998. However, drug crimes are not simply one type of offense. Patterns of arrests may differ depending on the type of drug, the type of offense, and on the age of the offender.

This display presents 1988–1998 adult and juvenile arrest rate trends for four types of drug crime: sale of Schedule I/II drugs; possession of Schedule I/II drugs; sale of marijuana; and possession of marijuana. Rates shown are based on numbers of adults and juveniles arrested per 100,000 adults and juveniles in the population. It is important to note that arrest rates vary greatly depending on the offense type. For example, arrest rates for marijuana sales range from about 10 to 40 per 100,000, whereas rates for marijuana possession range from about 50 to 400 per 100,000.

■ Overall, arrest rates for both adult and juvenile offenders increased from 1988 to 1998 across all four offense types exam-

ined. Juveniles showed a greater increase than adults across all four offense types.

■ Adult and juvenile arrest trends differed depending on type of drug involved. For both sale and possession of Schedule I/II drugs, adults arrest rates were consistently higher than juvenile rates. For both sale and possession of marijuana, adult rates were higher than juvenile rates between 1988 and 1993, but beginning in 1994 juvenile arrest rates exceeded those of adults.

■ Adult and juvenile arrest trends for the sale of schedule I/II drugs were similar from 1988 to 1993–1994. Adult and juvenile rates rose from 1988 to 1991, followed by a gradual decrease through about 1993–1994. However, from 1994 through 1998, adult arrests showed a steady increase, while during the same period juvenile arrest rates showed a gradual decrease.

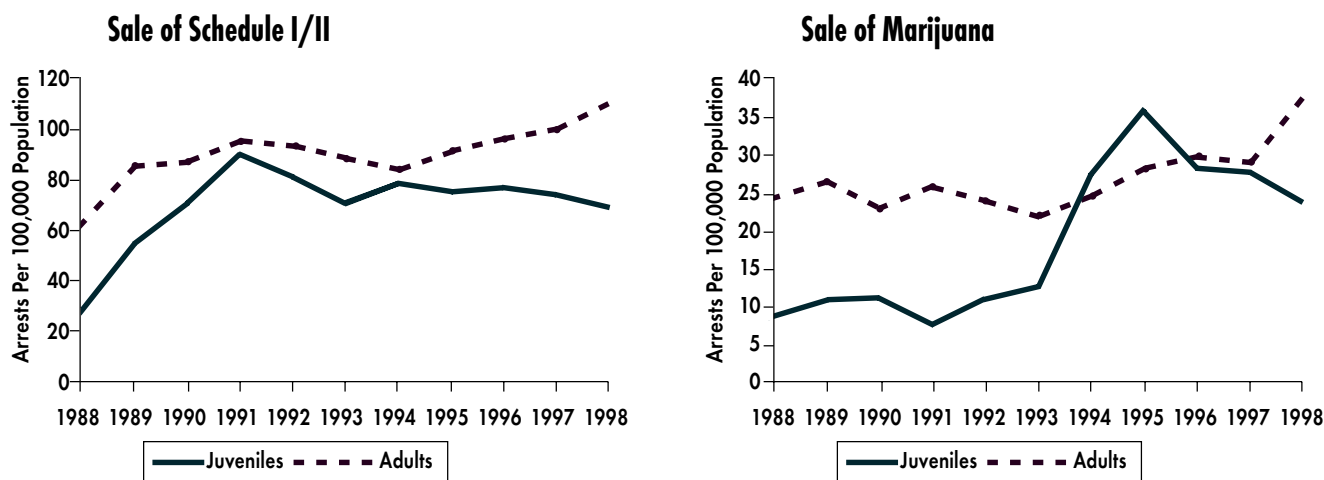
■ Arrest rates for possession of Schedule I/II drugs were the most stable of the four offenses examined. Both adult and juvenile rates increased from 1988 to 1998, but at a much smaller rate than for other offenses.

Adult arrest rates increased by 13% during this time, and juvenile rates increased by 67%.

■ Possession of Schedule I/II drugs arrest rates for adults were consistently three to four times higher than the arrest rates for juveniles.

■ The greatest overall increases occurred among juveniles arrested for marijuana offenses. Juvenile arrests for marijuana sale increased by 167% from 1988 to 1998, and marijuana possession arrests increased by 222%. The smallest increase occurred among adults arrested for possession of Schedule I/II drugs. Rates increased by only 13% from 1988 to 1998.

■ The increases in juvenile arrests for both sale and possession of marijuana followed a similar trend. Arrest rates for both sale and possession were relatively stable or decreased in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and reached their lowest rate in 1991. However, beginning in 1992 both sale and possession arrest rates began to increase and rose sharply. From 1991 to 1995, marijuana sales arrest rates increased by 350%. Simi-

Display 22: Arrest Rates for Specific Drug Crimes—Adults & Juveniles (1988–1998)

Data sources: *Crime in Virginia*, Uniform Crime Reporting Section, Virginia Department of State Police;
U.S. Bureau of Census and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia.

larly, from 1991 to 1996, marijuana possession arrest rates increased by 769%. Following these dramatic increases, arrest rates for both offenses decreased through 1998.

■ The adult arrest rate trend for marijuana possession was similar to that of juveniles, but not as dramatic. Like the juvenile rate, the adult rate reached a low point in 1991, followed by a steady increase through 1996. After 1996, the adult arrest rate declined through 1998. The trend for adult marijuana sale arrests was quite different from that for juveniles. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s the adult rate for sale of marijuana was relatively stable. In 1994 the adult arrest rate began a gradual increase, with a sharp increase in 1998.

■ Although juvenile arrest rates for marijuana sales surpassed adult rates in 1994 and 1995, they dropped below the adult rate in 1996 and remained below the adult rate through 1998. However, once juvenile rates for marijuana possession surpassed adult rates in 1994, they remained above the adult rates through 1998.

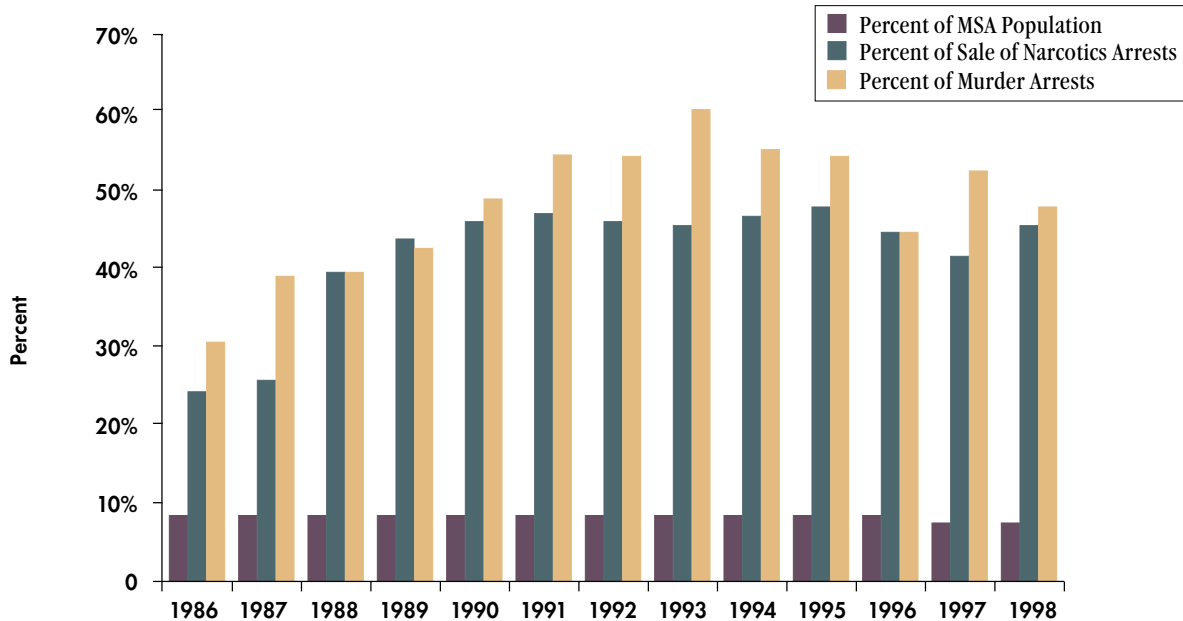
■ When comparing arrest rates for adults and juveniles, it is important to keep in mind the difference between arrest rates and actual numbers of arrests. Frequently, juveniles may have an arrest rate higher than the adult rate for a crime, but the actual number of juveniles arrested for the crime may be much lower than the number of adults arrested. For example, the graph depicting arrest rates for the possession of marijuana shows that in 1996 juveniles had an arrest rate of 310 per 100,000 population, whereas adults had an arrest rate of 238 per 100,000. However, in 1996 the actual number of adults arrested for marijuana possession was about 60 times the number of juveniles arrested.

Note: Adult arrest rates were computed using the number of persons age 18 and older in Virginia's population. Juvenile arrest rates were computed using the number of persons age 10 to 17 in Virginia's population. Under Virginia law, juveniles are defined as any persons under age 18 at the time of the offense. However, it is extremely rare for persons under age 10 to be arrested for crimes, so persons under age 10 are usually excluded from the population number when arrest rates are calculated.

culated. Additionally, Virginia law limits juveniles that can be committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice to those older than the age of 10.

Throughout the last decade, adult arrest rates for offenses involving narcotics such as cocaine were higher than the rates for juveniles. During the first part of the decade, adults were consistently arrested at higher rates for marijuana offenses as well. Starting in 1994, however, juveniles began to be arrested at higher rates than adults for marijuana offenses.

Display 23A: Narcotics Sales and Murder Arrests Involving Young Males in Richmond, Norfolk and Northern Virginia Areas (1986–1998)



Data Source: Crime in Virginia, Uniform Crime Reporting Section, Virginia Department of State Police.

Display 23: Narcotics Sales and Murder Among Young Males in Virginia

In the late 1980s, Virginia's larger urban areas saw major increases in arrests for narcotics sales and for homicides. One explanation is that this increase may have been related to the introduction of crack cocaine and the violence associated with illegal markets developing to distribute and sell the drug. A 1992 Bureau of Justice Statistics report noted that during the late 1980s, violence was used throughout the U.S. to protect or expand drug markets, intimidate or eliminate competitors, and punish cheating drugs sellers or buyers.

This display examines arrests for narcotics sales and murders in Virginia between 1986 and 1998, and focuses on arrests of males age 15 through 24 in Virginia's three largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs): Richmond, Norfolk, and northern Virginia.

Males age 15 to 24, often referred to as the "crime-prone" age cohort, were selected because they are disproportionately represented in arrests. Between 1990 and 1998, the murder arrest rate for this group was fourteen times the rate of all other persons combined. Additionally, these young males were arrested for narcotics sales at a rate eleven times greater

than that for all other persons combined. The three largest MSAs were examined because during the peak years of the crack-cocaine epidemic, these three areas accounted for between 70% to 90% of all narcotics sales arrests and between 70% and 74% of all arrests for murder. In all prior displays, crime trends were examined starting with the year 1988. The two graphs presented in this display begin with 1986. This provides a frame of reference prior to the introduction of crack-cocaine in Virginia.

■ Display 23A illustrates the disproportionate involvement of young adults in arrests for both narcotics sales and for homicides in Virginia's three largest MSAs from 1986 through 1998. Males 15 to 24 represented only about eight percent of the population in these areas, but accounted for about 25% to almost 50% of all the narcotics arrests and from about 30% to 60% of all the murder arrests.

■ The percentage of young males involved in narcotics sales arrests doubled in the ten years from 1986 to 1995. In 1986, 24% of the narcotics sales arrests in the three MSAs were arrests of males age 15 to 24. By 1995,

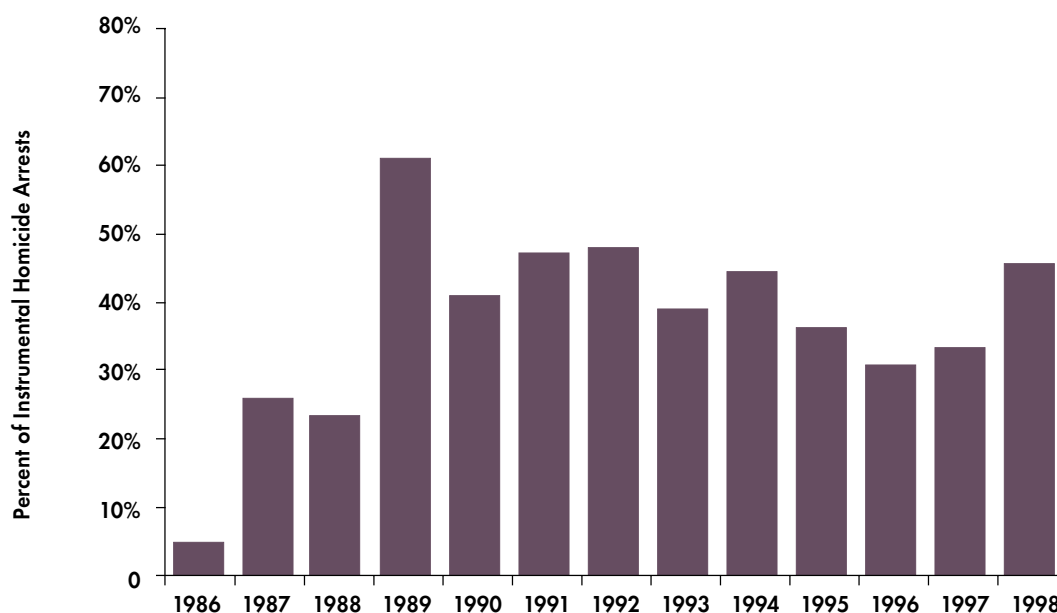
48% of those arrested for narcotics sales were young males. From 1996 through 1998, this percentage declined slightly to between 41% and 45% of all arrests.

■ The percentage of young males involved in murder arrests followed a similar pattern. In 1986, young males comprised 30% of the individuals arrested for murder in the three MSAs. However, by 1993, young males had doubled to 60% of all murder arrests. From 1994 through 1998 the percentage of young males arrested declined somewhat, but still remained above the levels prior to 1990.

■ It is difficult to determine the total extent of violence associated with illegal drug markets. Much of the violence associated with these markets is seldom reported. However, murder is the one offense most likely to come to the attention of the police. In addition, the data resources for homicides provide an opportunity to examine more closely the relationship between this violent offense and drug involvement.

■ Not all homicides are alike, and grouping homicides into categories may aid in defining prevention policies. One classification scheme used by researchers incor-

Display 23B: Narcotics-Related Instrumental Homicide Arrests Involving Young Males in Richmond, Norfolk and Northern Virginia Areas (1986–1998)



Data Source: Supplemental Homicide Reports, Uniform Crime Reporting Section, Virginia Department of State Police.

porates the incident circumstance, the victim-offender relationship, and precipitating offenses to classify homicides into two general types. Instrumental homicides include those in which the primary motive for the homicide is to obtain money, property or drugs. Examples of instrumental homicides include killings that result from a robbery or burglary or illegal drug markets. Expressive homicides include those in which the motive for the homicide is similar to the motive for assaults; i.e., the primary motive of the offender is to injure, overpower or intimidate another person. These forms of homicide often occur as a result of arguments, which escalate to lethal violence.

■ Display 23B provides a closer examination of murder arrests involving young males. This display includes murder arrests in the three largest MSAs that were classified as instrumental homicides, and illustrates the percentage of these arrests that could be identified as involving narcotics. Data in this display are from Supplemental Homicide Report (SHR) data collected by the Uniform Crime Report system. SHR data provide detailed information on homicide offenses, including circumstance informa-

tion needed to classify the homicide as instrumental or expressive. SHR information also denotes whether a homicide was considered narcotics-related.

■ In 1986, only five percent of the instrumental murder arrests involving young males were classified as narcotics related. However, during the next several years the percentage of narcotics-related murders rapidly increased, and by 1989 more than 60% were considered narcotics-related. The period 1986 through 1989 includes the time when crack-cocaine was beginning to take hold in the urban areas of the state. During the nine years from 1990 to 1998, the percentage of narcotics-related instrumental homicides decreased between 30% to 50% annually, but generally remained much higher than during the period prior to 1989.

■ It is likely that some unknown percentage of the homicides classified as expressive were actually instrumental homicides. Generally, law enforcement officials are conservative when classifying homicide circumstances, and homicides involving arguments that are suspected as involving drug transactions tend to be classified as

expressive unless there is verifiable proof that the homicide was committed to obtain drugs or property.

The three metropolitan statistical areas used in this display include:

Richmond-Petersburg MSA

Charles City Co., Chesterfield Co., Dinwiddie Co., Goochland Co., Hanover Co., Henrico Co., New Kent Co., Powhatan Co., Prince George Co., Colonial Heights City, Hopewell City, Petersburg City, Richmond City.

Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News MSA

Gloucester Co., Isle of Wright Co., James City Co., York Co., Chesapeake City, Hampton City, Newport News City, Norfolk City, Poquoson City, Portsmouth City, Suffolk City, Virginia Beach City, Williamsburg City.

Washington D.C.-Virginia-West Virginia MSA (Virginia portion)

Arlington Co., Clarke Co., Culpepper Co., Fairfax Co., Fauquier Co., King George Co., Loudoun Co., Prince William Co., Spotsylvania Co., Stafford Co., Warren Co., Alexandria City, Fairfax City, Falls Church City, Fredericksburg City, Manassas City, Manassas Park City.

— Display 24: Demographic Profile of Convicted Drug Felons by Current Conviction Offense (1995–1997) —

	Sell Cocaine & Crack [N* = 6604]	Sell Other Schedule I/II Narcotics [N* = 739]	Sell Marijuana [N* = 1939]	Possess Cocaine & Crack [N* = 1736]	Possess Other Schedule I/II Narcotics [N* = 179]	Possess Marijuana [N* = 10714]	Total Drug Offenses [N* = 21911]
Age							
14-17	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
18-24	43	40	38	25	24	50	32
25-29	19	20	21	17	18	22	18
30-34	15	14	15	20	18	13	18
35-39	11	12	12	19	17	8	15
40+	11	13	14	19	23	6	16
Race							
White	10	46	70	23	42	74	26
Non-White	90	54	30	77	58	26	74
Gender							
Female	13	13	14	20	18	14	17
Male	87	87	86	80	82	86	83
Marital Status							
Married	10	10	23	12	15	13	12
Single	90	90	77	88	85	87	88
Education							
0-8	16	15	13	14	14	10	15
9-11	45	39	33	39	35	29	40
12	30	33	37	34	32	40	33
13+	9	12	17	13	19	21	12
Employment							
Full-time	29	30	50	38	39	60	36
Part-time	14	14	12	13	14	15	13
Unemployed	51	48	29	44	40	18	44
Other	5	8	9	6	6	8	6
Drug Abuse							
Yes	60	72	60	71	78	54	67
No	40	28	40	29	22	46	33
Alcohol Abuse							
Yes	26	26	24	32	27	20	29
No	74	74	76	68	73	80	71
Family Felony Convictions							
Yes	43	36	28	35	32	22	37
No	57	64	72	65	68	78	63
Mental Health Treatment							
Yes	14	19	20	17	18	14	16
No	86	81	80	83	82	86	84

Data Source: Pre/Post-Sentence Investigation (PSI) Database, Virginia Department of Corrections.

*N represents the number of cases examined. Total number of cases for each offense type may not be included for all demographic characteristics due to some cases with missing/unknown characteristic values.

Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Display 24: Demographic Profile of Virginia Drug Felons

Drug offenders are typically characterized as young, minority males. This description applies to many drug offenders in Virginia, but a closer examination of these offenders reveals that they are a more demographically diverse group. Recognizing differences among drug offenders is essential for developing enforcement, adjudication, corrections, education and treatment programs that target individuals involved with specific types of drugs or offenses.

This display presents a demographic profile of offenders convicted in Virginia for felony drug offenses in general, and for six specific drug offenses. Data shown are drawn from the Pre- and Post-Sentence Investigation (PSI) database and represent three-year averages for offenders convicted in the years 1995 to 1997. Because the PSI database collects detailed information on offense types, the drug offense types shown in this and the following display are more specific than those shown in the previous drug displays using UCR arrest data.

■ Most convicted drug felons were young. Overall, more than 50% were under age 30, and one-third were under age 25. For all types of drug offenses examined, the predominant age group was 18 to 24. Young offenders were most frequent among those convicted of marijuana possession and the sale of cocaine and crack. Older offenders were most frequent among those convicted for possession of cocaine and crack, and other Schedule I/II narcotics.

■ Offenders under the age of 18 were rare, accounting for only one percent of convicted drug felons. However, juvenile offenders in this display are limited to those convicted of offenses serious enough to warrant transfer to the adult justice system. Most drug-offending juveniles in Virginia remain under the purview of the Department of Juvenile Justice, and are not included in the data examined in this display.

■ Overall, almost three-quarters of convicted drug felons were non-white. However, the racial composition of offenders varied across offense categories. For example, non-whites represented 90% of

those convicted for the sale of cocaine and crack, and 77% of those convicted of possessing cocaine and crack. Whites, in contrast, represented 70% of those convicted for the sale of marijuana and 74% of those convicted for possession of marijuana.

■ Male offenders comprised the majority (83%) of convicted drug offenders. Females were most often represented in convictions for possession of cocaine and crack (20%) or other Schedule I/II drugs (18%).

■ More than 60% of those convicted for the sale of cocaine and crack had less than a high school education. By contrast, more than 60% of those convicted of possession of marijuana had a high school education or greater.

■ Unemployment rates for convicted drug offenders were very high, with the highest rates among those convicted of selling cocaine and crack, and other Schedule I/II drugs. This suggests that involvement in illegal drug markets may represent the sole source of income for these offenders.

■ Offenders convicted of selling cocaine and crack were most likely to have a family member with one or more felony convictions. This finding is consistent with research indicating that familial involvement in drug trafficking is related to subsequent involvement in drug selling. Offenders convicted of possessing marijuana had the lowest incidence of family felony convictions.

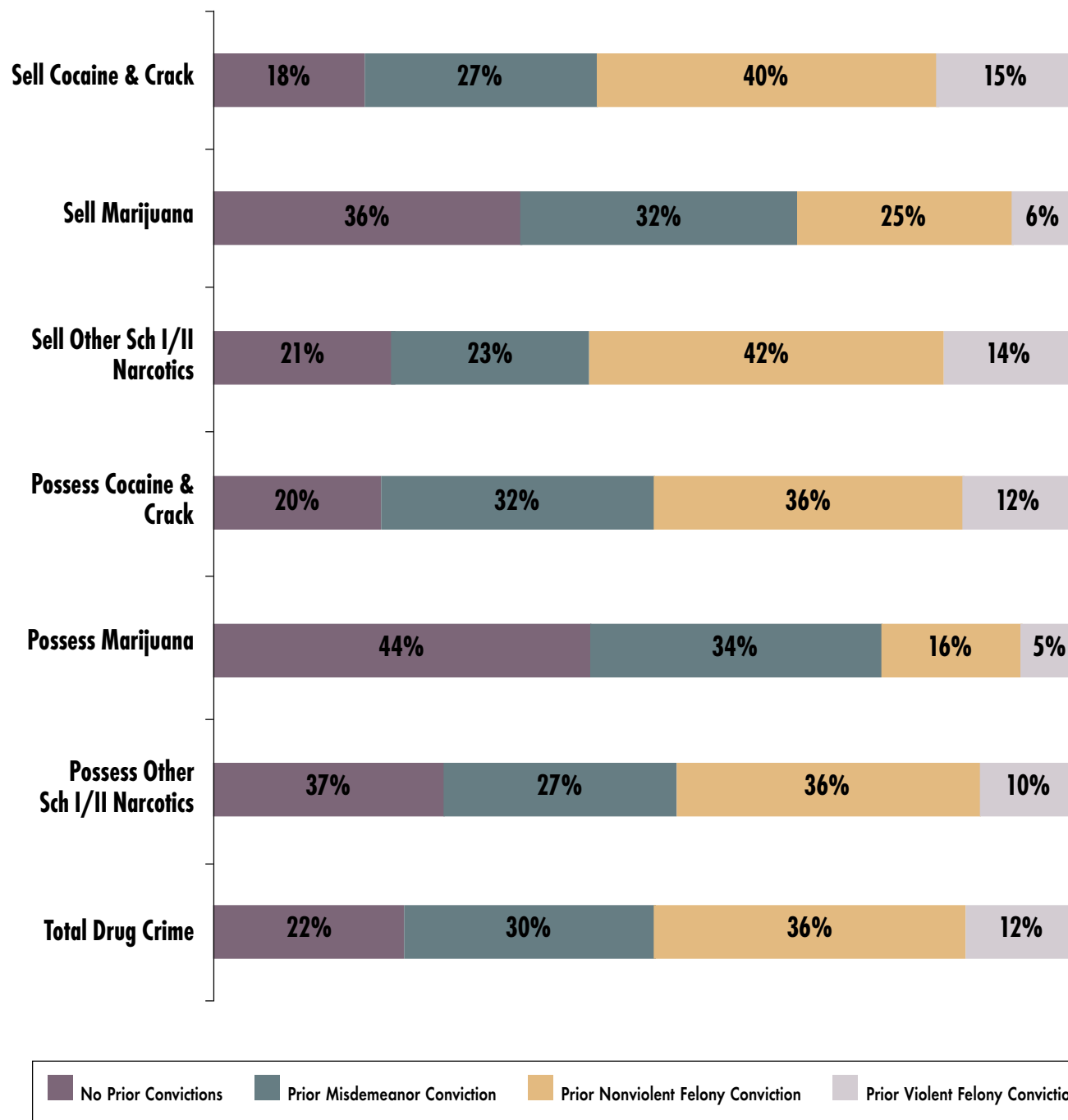
■ Slightly more than 15% of drug offenders had been referred to or had received prior mental health treatment. This was most frequent among those convicted of the sale of Schedule I/II narcotics and marijuana.

■ Offender characteristics varied significantly across different drug offense types. For example, a person convicted of a cocaine or crack offense was likely to be a young, unemployed minority male with little education. A person convicted of a marijuana offense, however, was likely to be older, white, more educated, and employed. This finding has significant implications for the design of sanctions and treatment, and for making decisions about

the risk of recidivism. For example, marijuana offenders may respond to sanctions involving the threatened loss of freedom or employment. Offenders involved with Schedule I/II drugs may require sanctions combined with intensive treatment, educational and vocational services. The diverse nature of drug offenders in Virginia suggests that drug policies should focus on individual offender characteristics more than on broad, overarching policies that may be unsuccessful because they fail to account for offender individuality.

■ Virginia currently provides a wide array of substance abuse treatment services for drug-involved offenders. These services span the entire criminal justice continuum and include outpatient treatment coordinated by local Community Services Boards, drug courts, single purpose institutions, prison-based therapeutic communities and jail-based residential services.

Schedule I/II drugs are defined in Display 18. Cocaine and crack are Schedule I drugs. Crack is a form of cocaine that is smoked rather than sniffed or injected like powdered cocaine.

Display 25: Prior Criminal Record Information for Convicted Drug Felons (1995–1997)

Prior violent convictions include prior juvenile and adult convictions for a violent offense.

Prior nonviolent convictions include prior juvenile and adult convictions for a non-violent offense (including drug offenses).

Percentages for each offender group may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Data Source: Pre/Post-Sentence Investigation database, Virginia Department of Corrections.

Display 25: Prior Criminal Record Information for Virginia Drug Felons

Prior displays which examined Virginia felons convicted of violent and property offenses showed that these offenders often had a history of prior criminal offending. Additionally, criminological research has shown that illegal drug activity is often related to other forms of criminal behavior. Enhanced criminal activity has been attributed to the direct pharmacological effects of drugs, to the need of users to obtain money to purchase drugs, and to the violent and competitive nature of the drug trade. Despite differing opinions of causation, most analyses of previous criminal behavior show the strong likelihood that an individual arrested for a drug offense has a previous history of criminal offending.

This display presents prior criminal record information for offenders convicted of six types of drug offenses and for drug offenses in general. Data are extracted from the Pre- and Post-Sentence Investigation database and are based on the average for felons convicted in Virginia from 1995 to 1997.

Prior record information is grouped into four categories of escalating seriousness: no prior record, record indicating a prior misdemeanor conviction, record indicating a prior nonviolent felony conviction, or record indicating a prior conviction for a violent felony offense. Each of these categories denotes the most serious offense appearing on the offenders' prior records.

■ Overall, the vast majority of convicted drug felons were repeat offenders. More than 75% of these offenders had some form of prior criminal conviction, and every category of drug offender examined contained offenders with prior misdemeanor, nonviolent and violent felony convictions.

■ Prior convictions for violent felony offenses were relatively rare among drug offenders. Overall, only 12% of drug offenders had a prior violent felony conviction.

■ Drug offenders convicted of selling cocaine and other Schedule I/II drugs were most likely to have a prior violent felony conviction. Fifteen percent of those convicted of selling crack/cocaine, and 14% of those convicted of selling other Schedule I/II narcotics, had a prior violent felony conviction. This finding is consistent with reports highlighting the violence associated with illegal drug markets.

■ Persons convicted of possessing crack/cocaine and other Schedule I/II drugs were less likely than drug sellers to have a prior violent felony conviction. However, they were still twice as likely to have a violent felony conviction as those convicted for marijuana offenses.

■ The majority of offenders convicted of marijuana possession or sales had a history of prior offenses. However, marijuana offenders were less likely to have a prior criminal record than offenders convicted for other drug offenses. Forty-four percent of those convicted of marijuana possession had no prior record, and 36% of those convicted of marijuana sales had no prior record.

■ Marijuana offenders that did have prior criminal histories were most likely to have a prior misdemeanor conviction rather than a conviction for a felony offense. Among those who did have a prior felony offense, the offense was three to four times as likely to be for a nonviolent felony as for a violent felony.

■ As a group, convicted drug felons in Virginia are about as likely to have a record of prior criminal activity as were Virginia's convicted violent and property felons examined in Displays 10 and 17, respectively. Among all three offender types, roughly 75% to 80% of offenders have a prior record. However, the prior offense history of drug offenders is somewhat less likely to include felony convictions than either violent or property offenders. Similarly, drug offenders who do have prior felony convictions are less likely to have a history of violent felony convictions than are violent or property felons.

■ Under Virginia's Sentencing Guidelines system, prior criminal record information plays a major role in determining the sentence recommended for persons convicted of felony drug offenses. The presence or absence of prior adjudications or convictions, as well as the types of prior offenses involved, are factors in determining whether the offender will be recommended for probation or incarceration, and in determining the length of any incarceration imposed.

■ The previous display showed that more than two-thirds of Virginia's convicted drug felons had evidence of substance abuse, and this display shows that the majority of these offenders also have prior criminal histories. National research indicates that many drug-involved offenders soon recidivate without any type of drug treatment. Other studies document significant reductions in recidivism following effective, institution-based substance abuse treatment. Together, these findings suggest that drug treatment during incarceration may have a significant impact on future recidivism rates for Virginia drug offenders.

Note: Under Code of Virginia §18.2-8, "Offenses are either felonies or misdemeanors. Such offenses as are punishable with death or confinement in a state correctional facility are felonies; all other offenses are misdemeanors."

More than 75% of persons convicted in Virginia for a felony drug offense had a record indicating a prior criminal conviction. Regardless of the type of drug involved, persons convicted of selling drugs were more likely to have a prior conviction than persons convicted of possessing drugs.
